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UNCLAS ABUJA 001158

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS RHETORIC KNOCKS GON ON CHARLES TAYLOR

REF: A. ABUJA 1152

[¶](#)B. ABUJA 1142

[¶](#)C. LAGOS 1333

[¶](#)1. (U) June 30, local print media reported that during a June 29 address to union leaders in Calabar, Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) President Adams Oshiomole threatened that union members would hold a "mass rally" in Calabar to protest the GON's failure to extradite former Liberian President Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL).

[¶](#)2. (U) Oshiomole went on to say that the NLC would "collaborate with the American government and other governments of the world to ensure that Taylor is released to answer for his activities...by the action of our government, it remains a sad note that we have not contributed to helping African countries to make leaders accountable after their reign. This will only encourage them to commit atrocities."

[¶](#)3. (SBU) COMMENT: As previously reported, President Obasanjo's decision to grant Taylor asylum was an unpopular one. Most Nigerians want Taylor to pay for the violence he inflicted upon Nigerians living in Liberia and Sierra Leone as well as for the deaths of Nigerian soldiers who participated in ECOMOG. Oshiomole's comments were an attempt to capitalize on popular discontent with Taylor's asylum in order to gain additional public support for the NLC in its fight against Obasanjo's campaign to disband the organization (REF C). Oshiomole's threat of a "mass rally" in Calabar was most likely rhetorical. END COMMENT.

CAMPBELL